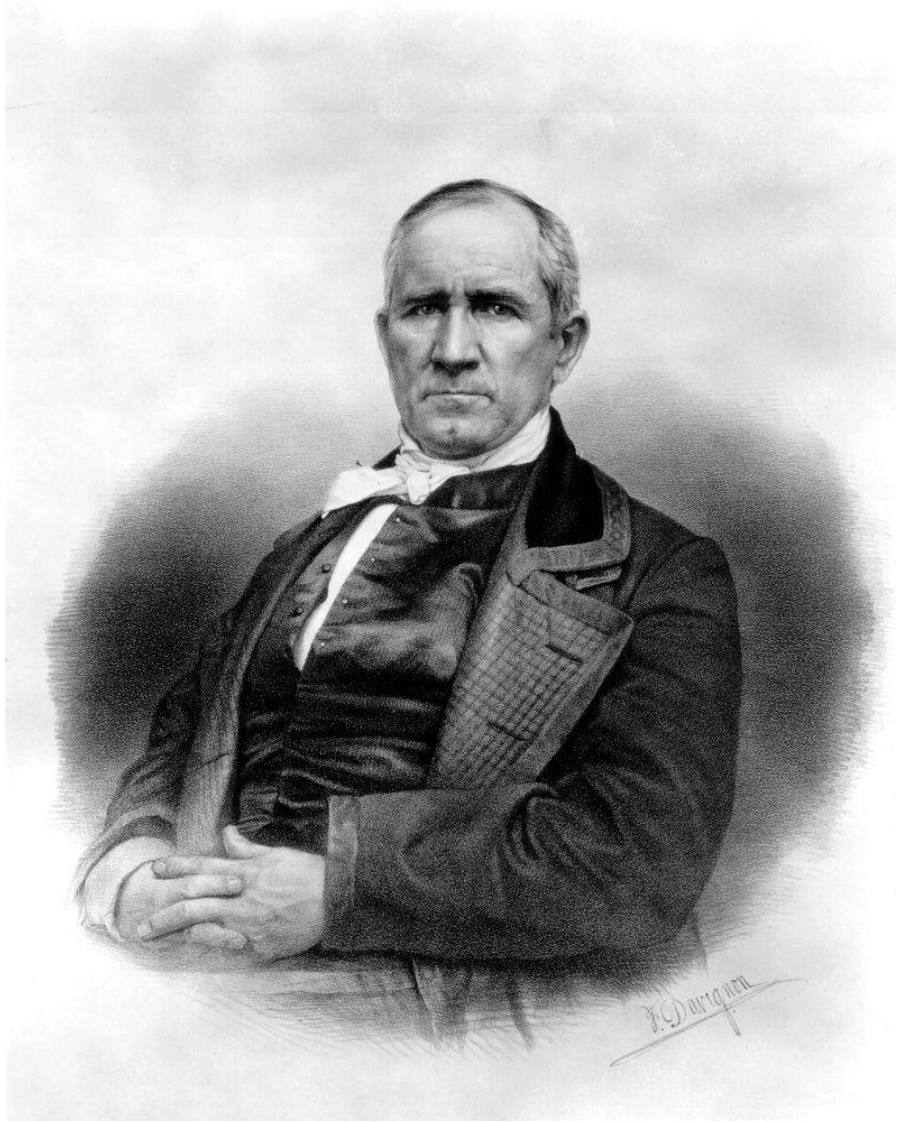
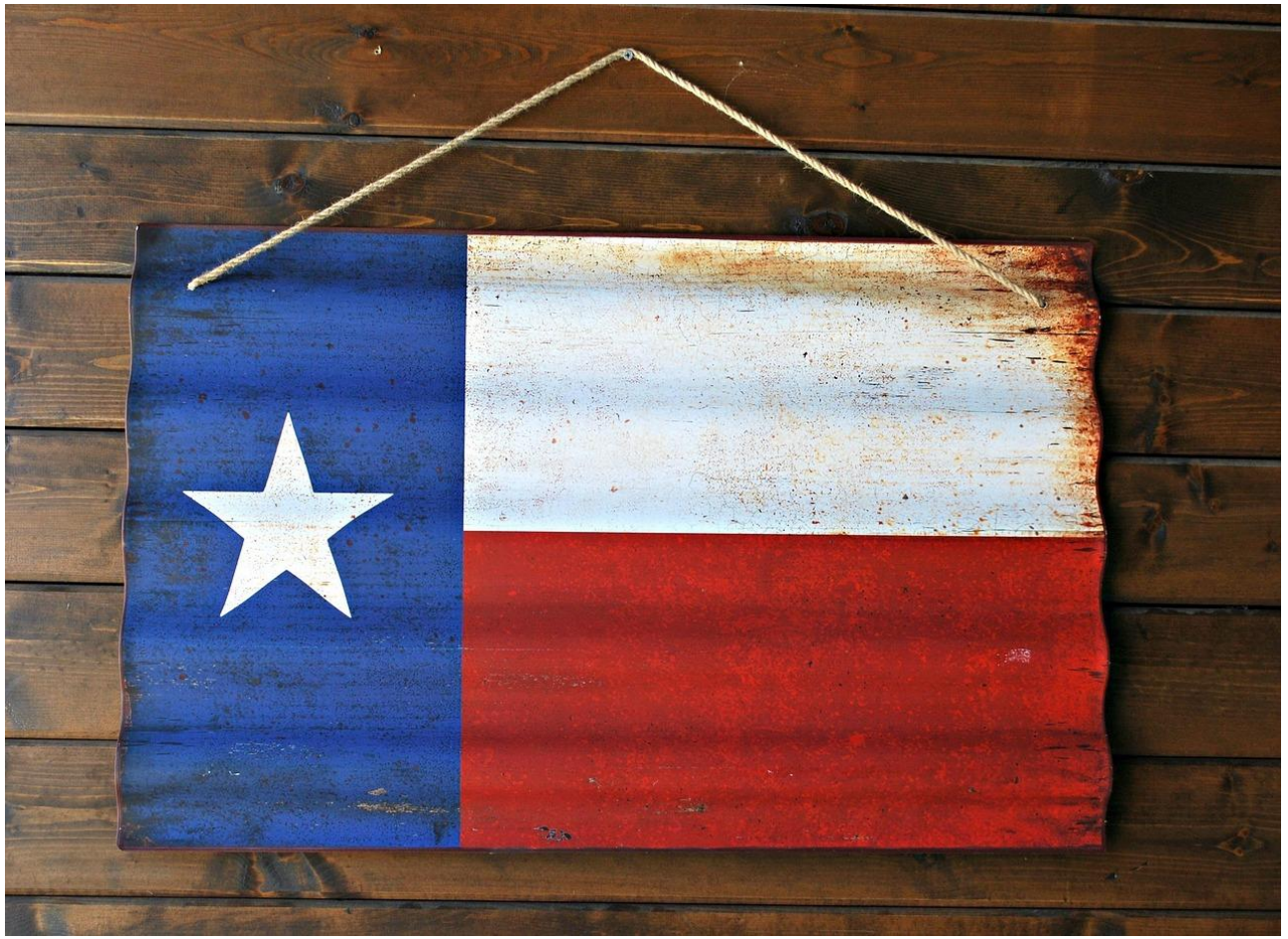
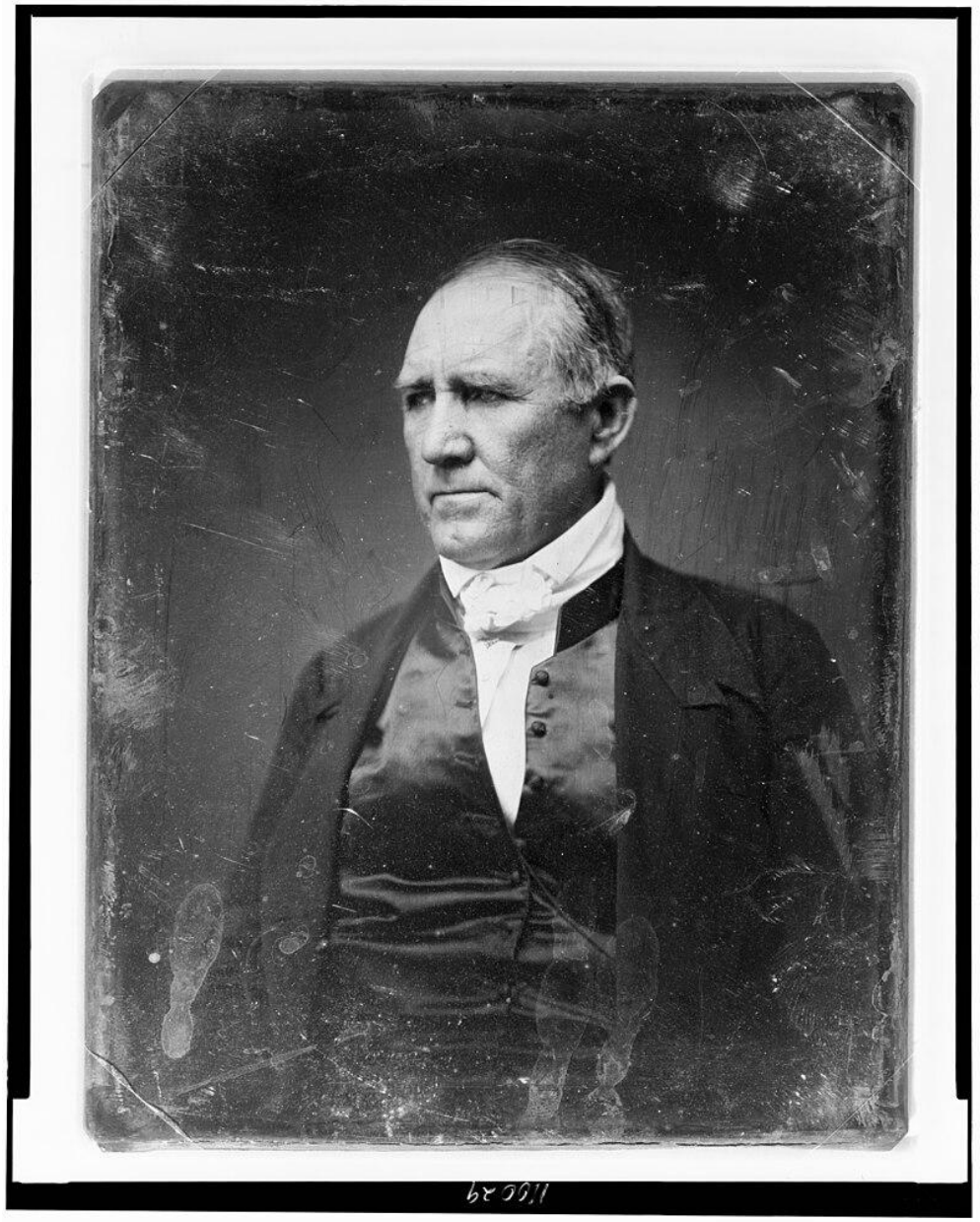
Sam Houston





Sam Houston

Was an American general and statesman who played a prominent role in the Texas Revolution. He served as the first and third president of the Republic of Texas and was one of the first two individuals to represent Texas in the United States Senate. He also served as the sixth governor of Tennessee and the seventh governor of Texas, the only individual to be elected governor of two different states in the United States.



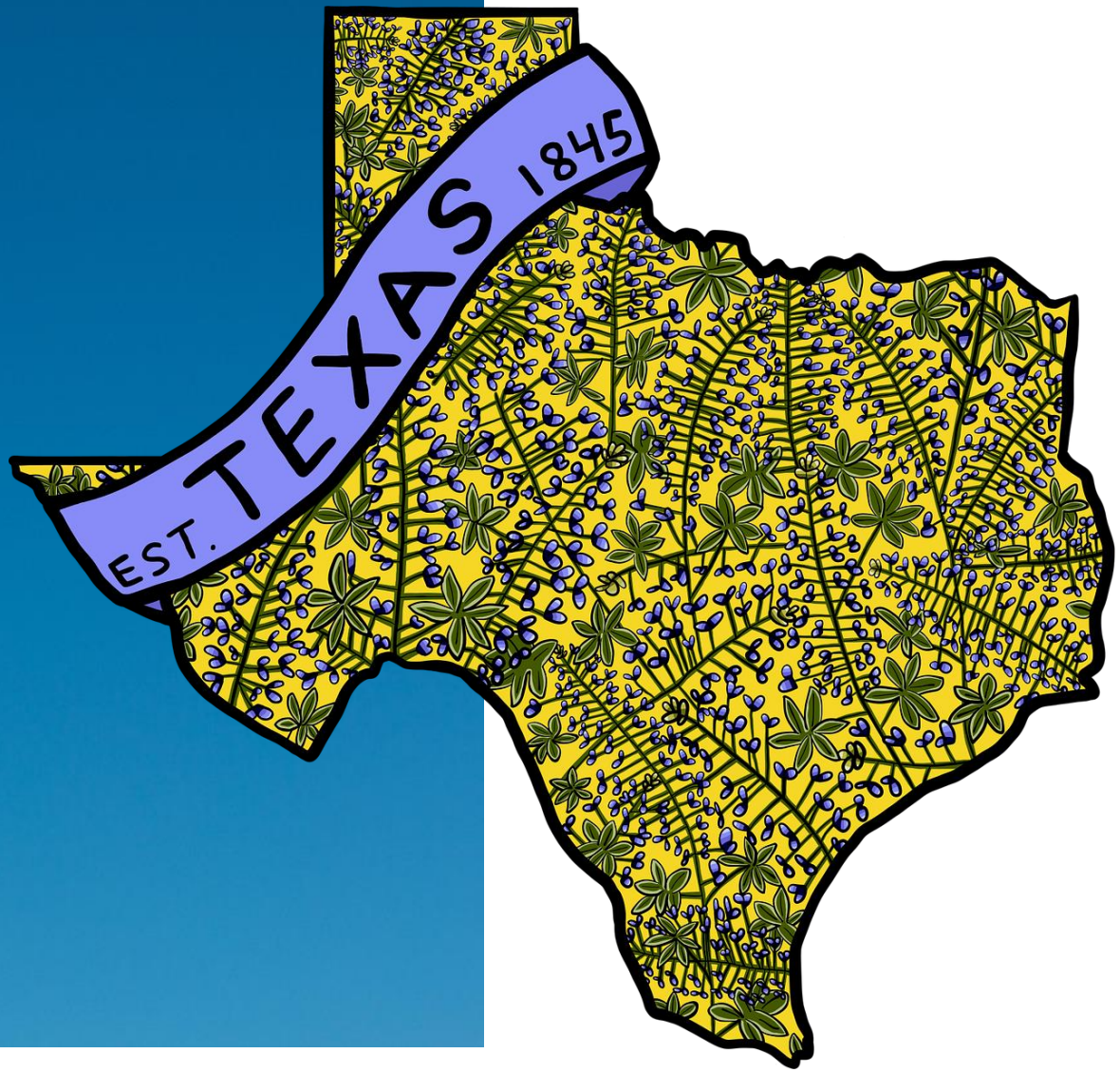
Sam Houston

Sam Houston

• Occidente state was divided into Sonora and Sinaloa in 1830.
• Aguascalientes was separated from Zacatecas in 1835.
• The Siete Leyes converted the states into departments. After its approval, the Federal District was abolished and reincorporated into the Department of México.
• Zacatecas declared independence in 1835, but was defeated by the army of the Republic. Texas declared independence 2 October 1835 and achieved it when Santa Anna signed the Treaty of Velasco (14 May 1836, never recognized by Mexico).
• In 1840, Nuevo León, Coahuila and Tamaulipas declared ephemeral independence as the Republic of the Río Grande.
• Yucatán was independent 1841-1843 and 1846-1848.
Alta California
Nuevo México
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Texas
Sonora
Baja California
Chihuahua
Coahuila
Nuevo León
Sinaloa
Durango
Tamaulipas
Zacatecas
Aguas-calientes
San Luis Potosí
Veracruz
Guanajuato
Jalisco
Querétaro
Yucatán
Tlaxcala
Veracruz
Colima
Michoacán
Puebla
Tabasco
Mexico
Oaxaca
Chiapas
UNITED PROVINCES OF CENTRAL AMERICA
Territorial division of Mexico during the First and Second Centralist Republics (1835 - 1846)
Departments
Separatist movements
Frontier claimed by Texas after independence (1836 - 1848)
Current frontier

A map of Mexico, 1835–1846, showing administrative divisions. The red areas show regions where separatist movements were active.

Sam Houston



Sam Houston

Born in Rockbridge County, Virginia, Houston and his family relocated to Maryville, Tennessee, while he was a teenager. Houston later ran away from home, spending about three years living with the Cherokee, becoming known as "Raven". He served under General Andrew Jackson in the War of 1812; afterwards, he was appointed as a sub-agent to oversee the removal of the Cherokee from Tennessee into Arkansas Territory in 1818. With the support of Jackson, among others, Houston won election to the United States House of Representatives in 1823. He strongly supported Jackson's presidential candidacies and, in 1827, Houston was elected as the governor of Tennessee. In 1829, after divorcing his first wife, Houston resigned from office, and moved to the Arkansas Territory to live with the Cherokee once more.

Houston settled in Texas in 1832. After the Battle of Gonzales, he helped organize Texas's provisional government and was selected as the top-ranking official in the Texian Army. He led the Texian Army to victory at the Battle of San Jacinto, the decisive battle in Texas's war for independence against Mexico.

After the war, Houston won the 1836 Texan presidential election. He left office due to term limits in 1838, but won another term in the 1841 Texas presidential election.

Sam Houston

Houston played a key role in the annexation of Texas by the United States in 1845 and, in 1846, was elected to represent Texas in the United States Senate. He joined the Democratic Party and supported President James K. Polk's prosecution of the Mexican–American War.

His Senate record was marked by his unionism and opposition to radicals from both the North and South. He voted for the Compromise of 1850, which settled many of the residual territorial issues from the Mexican–American War and the annexation of Texas. Houston owned slaves throughout his life. He voted against the Kansas–Nebraska Act, as he believed it would lead to increased sectional tensions over slavery, and his opposition to that act led him to leave the Democratic Party. He was an unsuccessful candidate for the presidential nomination of the American Party in the 1856 presidential election, as well as for the Constitutional Union Party in the 1860 presidential election. In 1859, Houston won election as the governor of Texas. In this role, he opposed secession, and unsuccessfully sought to keep Texas out of the Confederate States of America. He was forced out of office in 1861, and died two years later in 1863. Houston's name has been honored in numerous ways, and he is the eponym of the city of Houston, the fourth-most-populous city in the United States.

Sam Houston

Sam Houston Birthplace Marker in Rockbridge County, Virginia

Sam Houston

Samuel Houston was born in Rockbridge County, Virginia on March 2, 1793, to Samuel Houston and Elizabeth Paxton. Both of Houston's parents were descended from Scottish and Irish immigrants who had settled in Colonial America in the 1730s, including his great-grandfather John Houston. Houston's father was descended from Ulster Scots people and the Houston baronets, the founders of Clan Houston in Scotland. Samuel inherited the Timber Ridge plantation and mansion in Rockbridge County, Virginia, which was worked by enslaved African Americans. During the American Revolutionary War, Captain Houston served in Morgan's Rifle Brigade as a paymaster. He served in the Virginian militia, which required him to pay his own expenses and to be away from his family for long periods of time. Thus, the plantation and his family's finances suffered.

Church Hill (Lexington, Virginia)

Sam Houston

He had five brothers and three sisters Paxton, Robert, James (married Patience Bills), John, William (married Mary Ball), Isabella, Mary (married Matthew Wallace), and Eliza (who married Samuel Moore).

His father, Samuel Sr., planned to sell Timber Ridge and move west to Tennessee, where land was less expensive, but he died in 1806. Elizabeth, his mother, followed through on those plans, settling the family near Maryville, Tennessee, the seat of Blount County. At that time, Tennessee was on the American frontier, and even larger towns like Nashville were vigilant against Native American raids. He had dozens of cousins who lived in the surrounding area of east-central Tennessee. When they arrived, Elizabeth cleared the land, built a house, and planted crops. Her oldest children, Paxton, Isabella, and Robert died within a few years after they arrived in Tennessee. Elizabeth relied on James and John to run the store in Maryville, to operate the farm, and to watch over the younger children.

Houston had a carefree disposition, however, and liked to escape to explore the frontier. He was at odds with the concepts of hell and damnation preached by his mother's religion, Presbyterianism, and he was not interested in schooling. However, he did take an interest in his father's library, reading works by classical authors like Virgil, as well as more contemporary works by authors such as Jedidiah Morse.

Sam Houston

After his father's passing in 1807 and his lack of interest in farming and working in the family store, at the age of 16, he ran away from his family and his home to live with a Cherokee tribe, led by Chief John Jolly (Cherokee name: Ahuludegi, also spelled Oolooteka) on Hiwassee Island. Houston formed a close relationship with Jolly and learned the Cherokee language, becoming known as 'Raven. According to James L. Haley, he appreciated the "free and unsophisticated spiritual expression of the Native Americans. He left the tribe to return to Maryville in 1812, and he was hired at age 19 for a term as the schoolmaster of a one-room schoolhouse. He attended Porter Academy, where he was taught by Rev. Isaac L. Anderson, founder of Maryville College. It's thought that he attended Maryville College, but that hasn't been confirmed.

According to biographer John Hoyt Williams, Houston was not close with his siblings or his parents, and he rarely spoke of them in his later life. Haley states that he was interested in his younger brother's and his sisters' welfare when he lived on Hiwassee Island. He felt used by the rest of the family.

Sam Houston

Sam Houston had a diverse relationship with Native Americans, particularly the Cherokee from Tennessee. He was an adopted son, and he was a negotiator, strategist, and creator of fair public policy for Native Americans as a legislator, governor and president of the Republic of Texas. He left his widowed mother's home around 1808 and was taken in by John Jolly, a leader of the Cherokee. Houston lived in Jolly's village for three years. He adopted Cherokee customs and traditions, which stressed the importance of being honest and fair, and he learned to speak the Cherokee language. He felt that Cherokees and other indigenous people had been short-changed during negotiation of treaties with United States government, the realization influenced his decisions as a military officer, treaty negotiator, and in his roles as governor of the states of Tennessee and Texas, and president of the Republic of Texas.

Houston was a protégé of Andrew Jackson. He fought alongside the Cherokee against the Creek at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend (1814), where he was injured. In 1817 and 1818, he negotiated and administered treaties that moved Cherokee people southwest to the Arkansas Territory. He practiced law for around ten years, was elected a congressman from Tennessee, and later was elected governor of the state. In 1829, Houston had a short-lived marriage with Eliza Allen.

Sam Houston

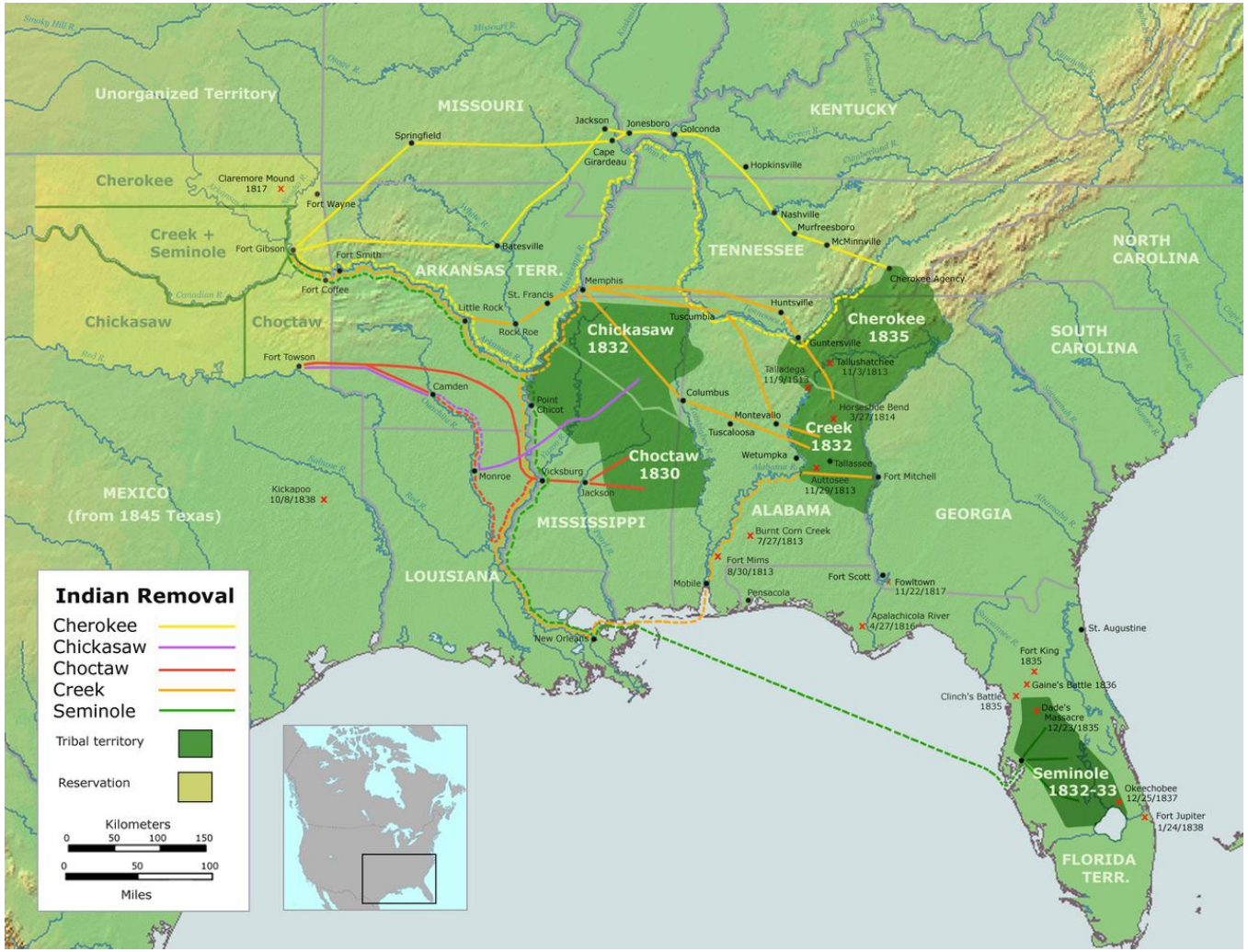
War of 1812 and aftermath

On March 24, 1813, Houston enlisted in the army at the young age of 20 in the[19] War of 1812 against Britain and Britain's Native American allies. He quickly impressed the commander of the 39th Infantry Regiment, Thomas Hart Benton, and by the end of 1813, Houston had risen to the rank of third lieutenant. In early 1814, the 39th Infantry Regiment became a part of the force commanded by General Andrew Jackson, who was charged with putting an end to raids by a faction of the Muscogee (or "Creek") tribe in the Old Southwest. Houston was wounded badly in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, the decisive battle in the Creek War. Although army doctors expected him to die of his wounds, Houston survived and convalesced in Maryville and other locations. While many other officers lost their positions after the end of the War of 1812 due to military cutbacks, Houston retained his commission with the help of Congressman John Rhea. During that time he was promoted to the rank of second lieutenant.

Sometime in early 1817, Sam Houston was assigned to a clerical position in Nashville, serving under the adjutant general for the army's Southern Division. Later in the year, Jackson appointed Houston as a sub-agent to handle the removal of Cherokee from East Tennessee.

Sam Houston

In February 1818, he received a strong reprimand from the Secretary of War John C. Calhoun after he wore Native American dress to a meeting between Calhoun and Cherokee leaders, beginning an enmity that lasted until Calhoun died in 1850. Angry over the incident with Calhoun and an investigation into his activities, Houston resigned from the army in 1818. He continued to act as a government liaison with the Cherokee, and in 1818, he helped some of the Cherokee resettle in Arkansas Territory.



Map of the route of the Trails of Tears — depicting the route taken to relocate Native Americans from the Southeastern United States between 1836 and 1839. The forced march of Cherokee removal from the Southeastern United States for forced relocation to the Indian Territory (present day Oklahoma).

Sam Houston

Early political career

After leaving government service, Houston began an apprenticeship with Judge James Trimble in Nashville. He quickly won admission to the state bar and opened a legal practice in Lebanon, Tennessee. With the aid of Governor Joseph McMinn, Houston won election as the district attorney for Nashville in 1819. He was also appointed as a major general of the Tennessee militia. Like his mentors, Houston was a member of the Democratic-Republican Party, which dominated state and national politics in the decade following the War of 1812.

Sam Houston

Tennessee gained three seats in the United States House of Representatives after the 1820 United States census, and, with the support of Jackson and McMinn, Houston ran unopposed in the 1823 election for Tennessee's 9th congressional district. In his first major speech in Congress, Houston advocated for the recognition of Greece, which was fighting a war of independence against the Ottoman Empire.

Houston strongly supported Jackson's candidacy in the 1824 presidential election, which saw four major candidates, all from the Democratic-Republican Party, run for president. As no candidate won a majority of the vote, the House of Representatives held a contingent election, which was won by John Quincy Adams. Supporters of Jackson eventually coalesced into the Democratic Party, and those who favored Adams became known as National Republicans.

With Jackson's backing, Houston won election as governor of Tennessee in 1827. Governor Houston advocated the construction of internal improvements such as canals, and sought to lower the price of land for homesteaders living in the public domain. He also aided Jackson's successful campaign in the 1828 presidential election

Sam Houston

In September 22, 1826, he severely wounded General William A. White in a pistol duel near Franklin, Kentucky, over the patronage political appointment of Nashville's Postmaster.

In January 1829, Houston married Eliza Allen, the daughter of wealthy plantation owner John Allen of Gallatin, Tennessee. The marriage quickly fell apart, possibly because Eliza loved another man. In April 1829, following the collapse of his marriage, Houston resigned as governor of Tennessee. Shortly after leaving office, he traveled to Arkansas Territory to rejoin the Cherokee.

A postmaster is the head of an individual post office, responsible for all postal activities in a specific post office. When a postmaster is responsible for an entire mail distribution organization (usually sponsored by a national government), the title of Postmaster General is commonly used.

Sam Houston

Political exile and controversy

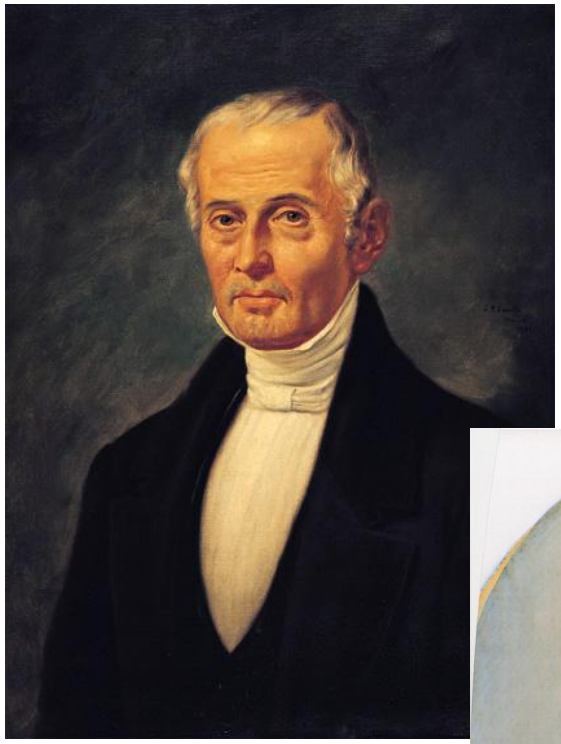
Houston was reunited with Ahuludegi's group of Cherokee in mid-1829. Because of Houston's government experience and connections with President Jackson, several local Native American tribes asked Houston to mediate disputes and communicate their needs to the Jackson administration. In late 1829, the Cherokee accorded Houston tribal membership and dispatched him to Washington to negotiate several issues. In anticipation of the removal of the remaining Cherokee east of the Mississippi River, Houston unsuccessfully bid to supply rations to the Native Americans during their journey.

When Houston returned to Washington in 1832, Congressman William Stanbery alleged that Houston had placed a fraudulent bid in 1830 in collusion with the Jackson administration. On April 13, 1832, after Stanbery refused to answer Houston's letters regarding the incident, Houston beat Stanbery with a cane. After the beating, the House of Representatives brought Houston to trial. By a vote of 106 to 89, the House convicted Houston, and Speaker of the House Andrew Stevenson formally reprimanded Houston. A federal court also required Houston to pay $500 in damages.

Sam Houston

In mid-1832, Houston's friends William H. Wharton and John Austin Wharton wrote to convince him to travel to the Mexican possession of Texas, where unrest among the American settlers was growing. The Mexican government had invited Americans to settle the sparsely populated region of Texas, but many of the settlers, including the Whartons, disliked Mexican rule. Houston crossed into Texas in December 1832, and shortly thereafter, he was granted land in Texas.

Houston was elected to represent Nacogdoches, Texas at the Convention of 1833, which was called to petition Mexico for statehood (at the time, Texas was part of the state of Coahuila y Tejas). Houston strongly supported statehood, and he chaired a committee that drew a proposed state constitution. After the convention, Texan leader Stephen F. Austin petitioned the Mexican government for statehood, but he was unable to come to an agreement with President Valentín Gómez Farías.



Sam Houston

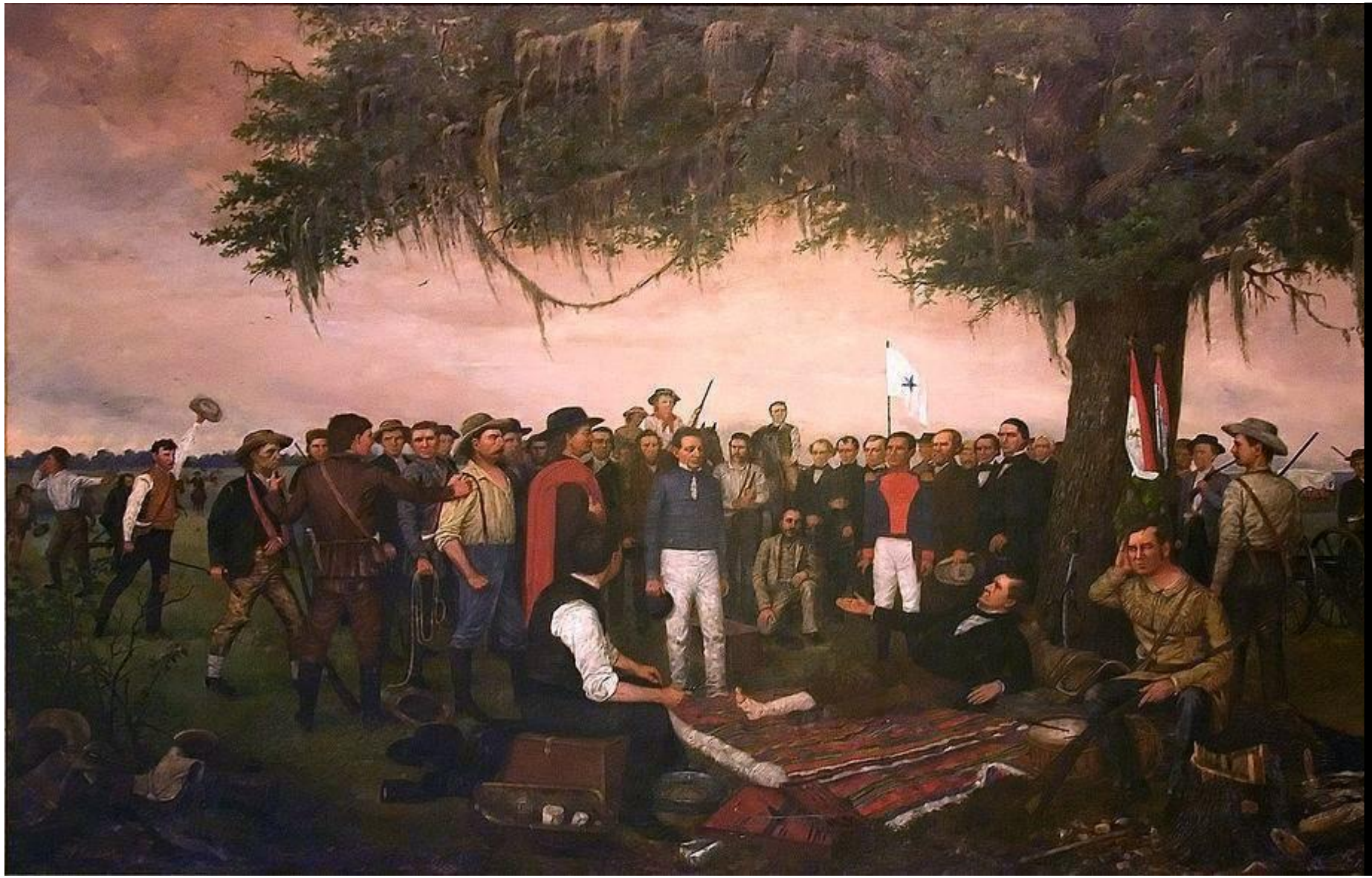
Along with Austin and others, Houston helped organize the Consultation into a provisional government for Texas. In November, Houston joined with most other delegates in voting for a measure that demanded Texas statehood and the restoration of the 1824 Constitution of Mexico. The Consultation appointed Houston as a major general and the highest-ranking officer of the Texian Army, though the appointment did not give him effective control of the militia units that constituted the Texian Army. Houston helped organize the Convention of 1836, where the Republic of Texas declared independence from Mexico, and appointed him as Commander-in-Chief of the Texas Army. Shortly after the declaration, the convention received a plea for assistance from William B. Travis, who commanded Texan forces under siege by Santa Anna at the Alamo.

The convention confirmed Houston's command of the Texian Army and dispatched him to lead a relief of Travis's force, but the Alamo fell before Houston could organize his forces at Gonzales, Texas. Seeking to intimidate Texan forces into surrender, the Mexican army killed every defender at the Alamo; news of the defeat outraged many Texans and caused desertions in Houston's ranks. Commanding a force of about 350 men that numerically was inferior to that of Santa Anna, Houston retreated east across the Colorado River.

Sam Houston

Though the provisional government, as well as many of his own subordinates, urged him to attack the Mexican army, Houston continued the retreat east, informing his soldiers that they constituted "the only army in Texas now present ... There are but a few of us, and if we are beaten, the fate of Texas is sealed. Santa Anna divided his forces and finally caught up to Houston in mid-April 1836. Santa Anna's force of about 1,350 soldiers trapped Houston's force of 783 men in a marsh; rather than pressing the attack, Santa Anna ordered his soldiers to make camp. Upon hearing this, the Texian soldiers were wanting to go out and fight.

Sam Houston

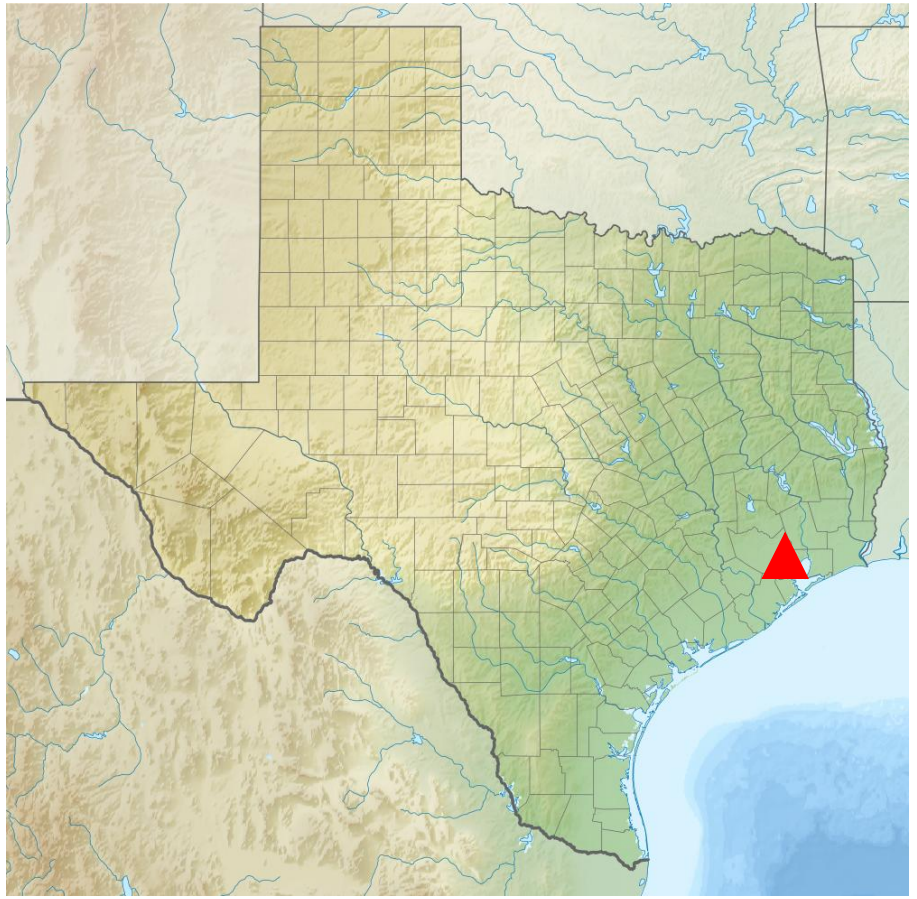


William Huddle's 1886 depiction of the end of the Texas Revolution shows Mexican General Santa Anna surrendering to the wounded Sam Houston after the Battle of San Jacinto in 1836. The Revolution lasted less than one year but resulted in a great loss of territory for the Mexicans. Following the Revolution, Texas proclaimed itself a republic affiliated with neither the United States nor Mexico.

Sam Houston

Sam Houston

Houston's force of 783 men in a marsh; rather than pressing the attack, Santa Anna ordered his soldiers to make camp. Upon hearing this, the Texian soldiers were wanting to go out and fight. They were tired of retreating and wanted to do something instead of camping there. Even though Houston was hesitant about it, he let them take the reins and decide to attack. On April 21, Houston ordered an attack on the Mexican army, beginning the Battle of San Jacinto. The Texans quickly routed Santa Anna's force, though Houston's horse was shot out under him and his ankle was shattered by a stray bullet. In the aftermath of the Battle of San Jacinto, a detachment of Texans captured Santa Anna. Santa Anna was forced to sign the Treaty of Velasco, which established a ceasefire between the two forces and laid out the first few steps towards Texan independence. Houston stayed briefly for negotiations, then returned to the United States for treatment of his ankle wound.



Sam Houston

Victory in the Battle of San Jacinto made Houston a hero to many Texans, and he won the 1836 Texas presidential election, defeating Stephen F. Austin, who would receive the honor of having the city of Austin named after him, and Henry Smith. Houston took office on October 22, 1836, after interim president David G. Burnet resigned. During the presidential election, the voters of Texas overwhelmingly indicated their desire for Texas to be annexed by the United States. Houston, meanwhile, faced the challenge of assembling a new government, putting the country's finances in order, and handling relations with Mexico. He selected Mirabeau Lamar as vice president, Thomas Jefferson Rusk as secretary of war, Smith as secretary of the treasury, Samuel Rhoads Fisher as secretary of the navy, James Collinsworth as attorney general, and Austin as secretary of state.

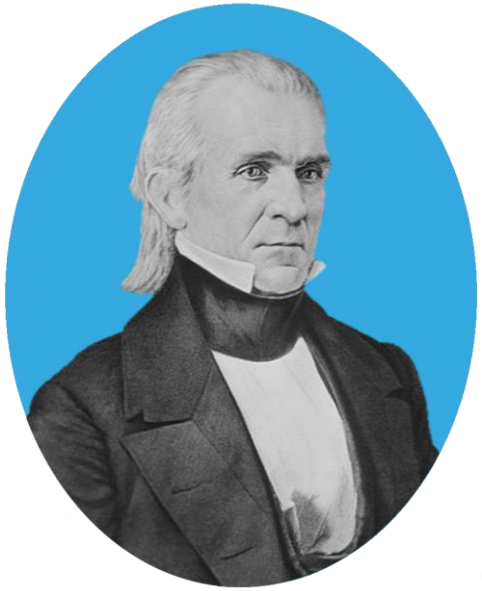
Sam Houston

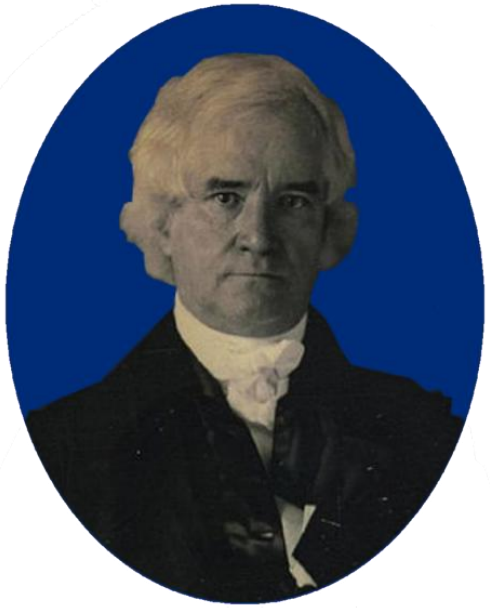
Houston sought normalized relations with Mexico, and despite some resistance from the legislature, arranged the release of Santa Anna. Concerned about upsetting the balance between slave states and free states, U.S. President Andrew Jackson refused to push for the annexation of Texas, but in his last official act in office he granted Texas diplomatic recognition. With the United States unwilling to annex Texas, Houston began courting British support; as part of this effort, he urged the end of the importation of slaves into Texas.

In early 1837, the government moved to a new capital, the city of Houston, named after him as the country's first president. In 1838, Houston frequently clashed with Congress over issues such as a treaty with the Cherokee and a land-office act[64] and was forced to put down the Córdova Rebellion, a plot to allow Mexico to reclaim Texas with aid from the Kickapoo Indians. The Texas constitution barred presidents from seeking a second term, so Houston did not stand for re-election in the 1838 election and left office in late 1838. He was succeeded by Mirabeau B. Lamar, who, along with Burnet, led a faction of Texas politicians opposed to Houston. The Lamar administration removed many of Houston's appointees, launched a war against the Cherokee, and established a new capital at Austin, Texas.[66] Meanwhile, Houston opened a legal practice and co-founded a land company with the intent of developing the town of Sabine City. In 1839, he was elected to represent San Augustine County in the Texas House of Representatives.
Houston defeated Burnet in the 1841 Texas presidential election, winning a large majority of the vote. Houston appointed Anson Jones as secretary of state, Asa Brigham as secretary of the treasury, George Washington Hockley as secretary of war, and George Whitfield Terrell as attorney general.

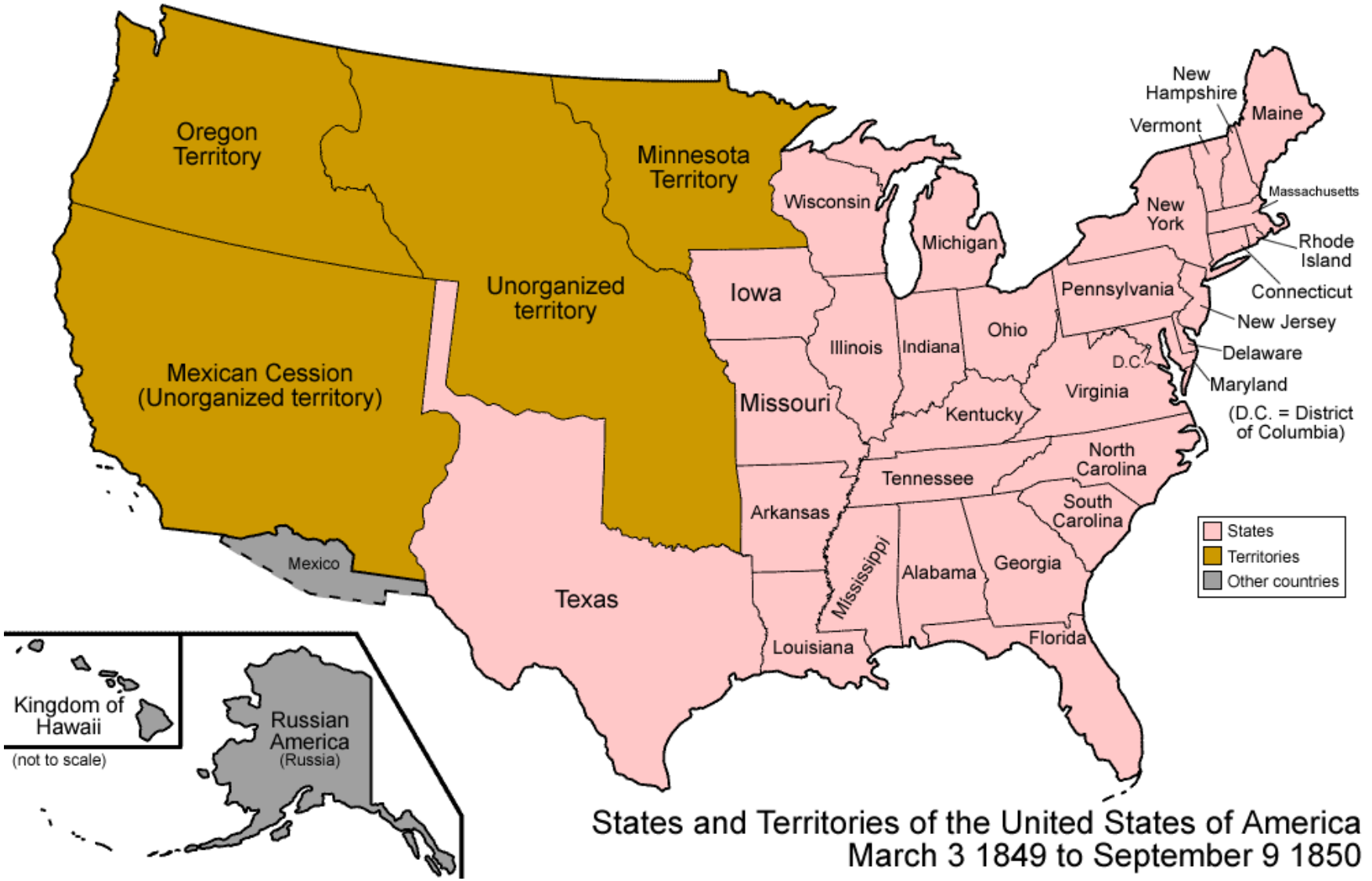
Sam Houston

Henry Clay and Martin Van Buren, the respective front-runners for the Whig and Democratic nominations in the 1844 presidential election, both opposed the annexation of Texas. However, Van Buren's opposition to annexation damaged his candidacy, and he was defeated by James K. Polk, an acolyte of Jackson and an old friend of Houston, at the 1844 Democratic National Convention. Polk defeated Clay in the general election, giving backers of annexation an electoral mandate. Meanwhile, Houston's term ended in December 1844, and he was succeeded by Anson Jones, his secretary of state. In the waning days of his own presidency, Tyler used Polk's victory to convince Congress to approve of the annexation of Texas. Seeking Texas's immediate acceptance of annexation, Tyler made Texas a generous offer that allowed the state to retain control of its public lands, though it would be required to keep its public debt. A Texas convention approved of the offer of annexation in July 1845, and Texas officially became the 28th U.S. state on December 29, 1845.





Sam Houston


Oregon Territory
Minnesota Territory
Unorganized territory
Mexican Cession (Unorganized territory)
Texas
Mexico
Iowa
Missouri
Arkansas
Louisiana
Wisconsin
Michigan
Illinois
Indiana
Ohio
Kentucky
Tennessee
Mississippi
Alabama
Georgia
Florida
South Carolina
North Carolina
Virginia
Pennsylvania
New York
New Hampshire
Vermont
Maine
Massachusetts
Rhode Island
Connecticut
New Jersey
Delaware
Maryland
D.C.
(D.C. = District of Columbia)
States
Territories
Other countries
Kingdom of Hawaii
(not to scale)
Russian America
(Russia)
States and Territories of the United States of America
March 3 1849 to September 9 1850

Sam Houston

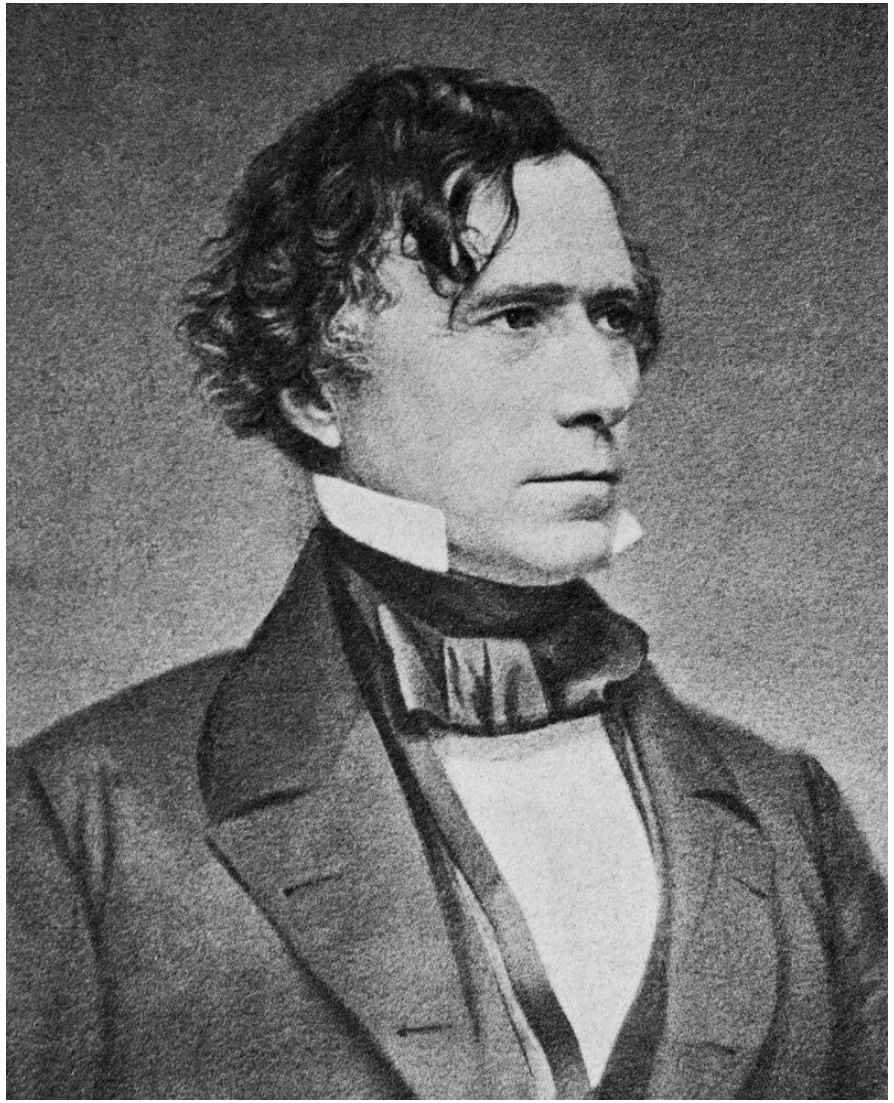
In February 1846, the Texas legislature elected Houston and Thomas Jefferson Rusk as Texas's two inaugural U.S. senators. Houston chose to align with the Democratic Party, which contained many of his old political allies, including President Polk. As a former president of Texas, Houston is the only former foreign head of state to have served in the U.S. Congress. He was the first person to serve as the governor of a state and then be elected to the U.S. Senate by another state. In 2018, Mitt Romney became the second. William W. Bibb accomplished the same feat in reverse order.

Breaking with the Senate tradition that held that freshman senators were not to address the Senate, Houston strongly advocated in early 1846 for the annexation of Oregon Country. In the Oregon Treaty, reached later in 1846, Britain and the United States agreed to split Oregon Country. Meanwhile, Polk ordered General Zachary Taylor to lead a U.S. army to the Rio Grande, which had been set as the Texas-Mexico border under the Treaty of Velasco; Mexico claimed the Nueces River constituted the true border.

After a skirmish between Taylor's unit and the Mexican army, the Mexican–American War broke out in April 1846. Houston initially supported Polk's prosecution of the war, but differences between the two men emerged in 1847. After two years of fighting, the United States defeated Mexico and, through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, acquired the Mexican Cession. Mexico also agreed to recognize the Rio Grande as the border between Mexico and Texas.

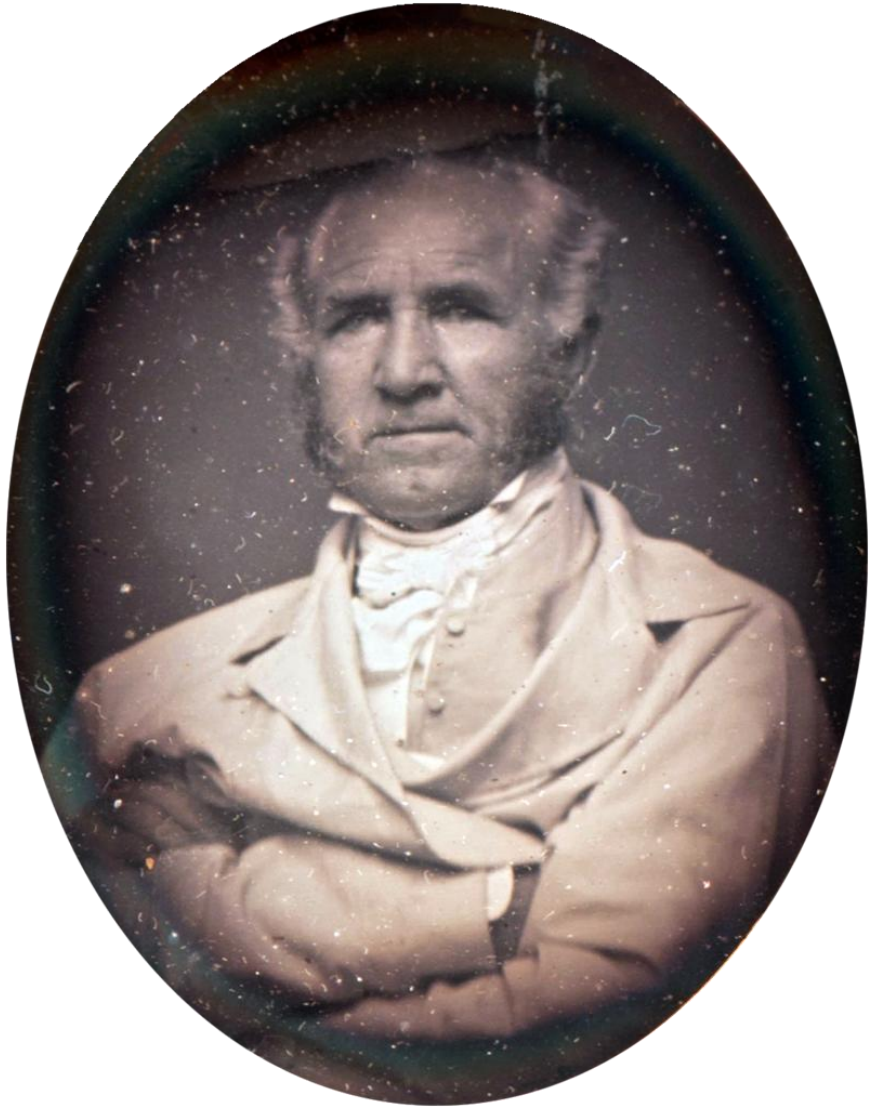
After the war, disputes over the extension of slavery into the territories raised sectional tensions.

Sam Houston



Unlike most of his Southern colleagues, Houston voted for the Oregon Bill of 1848, which organized Oregon Territory as a free territory. Defending his vote to create a territory that excluded slavery, Houston stated "I would be the last man to wish to do anything injurious to the South, but I do not think that on all occasions we are justified in agitating [slavery]. He criticized both Northern abolitionists and Democratic followers of Calhoun as extremists who sought to undermine the union. He supported the Compromise of 1850, a sectional compromise on slavery on the territories. Under the compromise, California was admitted as a free state, the slave trade was prohibited in the District of Columbia, a more stringent fugitive slave law was passed, and Utah Territory and New Mexico Territory were established. Texas gave up some of its claims on New Mexico, but it retained El Paso, Texas, and the United States assumed Texas's large public debt. Houston sought the Democratic nomination in the 1852 presidential election, but he was unable to consolidate support outside of his home state. The 1852 Democratic National Convention ultimately nominated Franklin Pierce, a compromise nominee, who went on to win the election.

Sam Houston



Pierce and Buchanan administrations (1853–1859)

In 1854, Senator Stephen A. Douglas led the passage of the Kansas–Nebraska Act, which organized Kansas Territory and Nebraska Territory. The act also repealed the Missouri Compromise, an act that had banned slavery in territories north of parallel 36°30′ north. Houston voted against the act, in part because he believed that Native Americans would lose much of their land as a result of the act. He also perceived that it would lead to increased sectional tensions over slavery. Houston's opposition to the Kansas–Nebraska Act led to his departure from the Democratic Party.

In 1855, Houston began to be associated publicly with the American Party, the political wing of the nativist and unionist Know Nothing movement. The Whig Party had collapsed after the passage of the Kansas–Nebraska Act, and the Know Nothings and the anti-slavery Republican Party had both emerged as major political movements.

Sam Houston

Houston's affiliation with the party stemmed in part from his fear of the growing influence of Catholic voters; though he opposed barring Catholics from holding office, he wanted to extend the naturalization period for immigrants to 21 years. He was attracted to the Know Nothing's support for a Native American state as well the party's unionist stance.

Houston sought the presidential nomination at the Know Nothing party's 1856 national convention, but the party nominated former President Millard Fillmore. Houston was disappointed by Fillmore's selection as well as the party platform, which did not rebuke the Kansas–Nebraska Act, but he eventually decided to support Fillmore's candidacy. Despite Houston's renewed support, the American Party split over slavery, and Democrat James Buchanan won the 1856 presidential election. The American Party collapsed after the election, and Houston did not affiliate with a national political party for the remainder of his tenure in the senate. In the 1857 Texas gubernatorial election, Texas Democrats nominated Hardin Richard Runnels, who supported the Kansas–Nebraska Act and attacked Houston's record. In response, Houston announced his own candidacy for governor, but Runnels defeated him by a decisive margin. It was the only electoral defeat of his career. After the gubernatorial election, the Texas legislature denied Houston re-election in the senate; Houston rejected calls to resign immediately and served until the end of his term in early 1859.

Sam Houston

Before he successfully became the governor of Texas, Houston had previously run in 1857 but did not win. He then ran in 1859, and won making him the new governor of Texas. Houston ran against Runnels in the 1859 gubernatorial election. Capitalizing on Runnels's unpopularity over state issues such as Native American raids, Houston won the election and took office in December 1859. In the 1860 presidential election, Houston and John Bell were the two major contenders for the presidential nomination of the newly formed Constitutional Union Party, which consisted largely of Southern unionists. Houston narrowly trailed Bell on the first ballot of the 1860 Constitutional Union Convention, but Bell clinched the nomination on the second ballot. Nonetheless, some of Houston's Texan supporters nominated him for president in April 1860. Other backers attempted to launch a nationwide campaign, but in August 1860, Houston announced that he would not be a candidate for president. He refused to endorse any of the remaining presidential candidates. In late 1860, Houston campaigned across his home state, calling on Texans to resist those who advocated for secession if Republican nominee Abraham Lincoln won the 1860 election.

Sam Houston

After Lincoln won the November 1860 presidential election, several Southern states seceded from the United States and formed the Confederate States of America. A Texas political convention voted to secede from the United States on February 1, 1861, and after Houston refused to swear an oath of loyalty to the Confederacy, the legislature declared the governorship vacant. Houston did not recognize the validity of his removal, but he did not attempt to use force to remain in office, and he refused aid from the federal government to prevent his removal. His successor, Edward Clark, was sworn in in March 1861.

After leaving office, Houston returned to his home in Galveston. He later settled in Huntsville, Texas, where he lived in a structure known as the Steamboat House. In the midst of the Civil War, Houston was shunned by many Texas leaders, though he continued to correspond with Confederate officer Ashbel Smith and Texas governor Francis Lubbock. His son, Sam Houston Jr., served in the Confederate army during the Civil War, but returned home after being wounded at the Battle of Shiloh. Houston's health suffered a precipitous decline in April 1863, which contributed to his death on July 26, 1863, at 70 years of age.

Sam Houston

Margaret Lea Houston (April 11, 1819 – December 3, 1867) was First Lady of the Republic of Texas during her husband Sam Houston's second term as President of the Republic of Texas. They met following the first of his two non-consecutive terms as the Republic's president, and married when he was a representative in the Congress of the Republic of Texas. She was his third wife, remaining with him until his death.

She came from a close-knit family in Alabama, many of whom also moved to Texas when she married the man who was an accomplished politician in both Tennessee and Texas, and who had won the Battle of San Jacinto during the Texas Revolution. The couple had eight children, and she gave birth to most of them while he was away attending to politics. Her mother Nancy Lea was a constant in their lives, helping with the children, managing the household help, and always providing either financial assistance or temporary housing. Following the Annexation of Texas to the United States, Sam Houston shuttled back and forth to Washington, D.C. as the state's U.S. senator for 13 years, while Margaret remained in Texas raising their children.

Sam Houston

Margaret Moffette Lea was born April 11, 1819, into a family of devout Baptists in Perry County, Alabama. Her father Temple Lea was a church deacon and the state treasurer of the Alabama Baptist Convention, and her mother Nancy Moffette Lea was the only woman delegate at the convention's formation. Margaret was the fifth of six children that included older brothers Martin, Henry Clinton and Vernal, older sister Varilla, and younger sister Antoinette. The Lea cotton plantation had been acquired with money from a Moffette family inheritance, and was operated by Nancy.

When her father died in 1834, she inherited five slaves: Joshua, Eliza, her favorite, Viannah, Charlotte and Jackson. The older Lea children had married prior to Temple's death, but Vernal, Margaret and Antoinette accompanied the widowed Nancy when she moved into her son Henry's home at Marion. He was an accomplished attorney who sat on the boards of educational institutions, and would be elected to the Alabama State Senate in 1836.

The year before he met Margaret, Houston had purchased property at Cedar Point on Galveston Bay in Chambers County, which he named Raven Moor, and planned to expand with income from his law practice. The existing two-room log dogtrot house with its detached slave quarters overlooked Galveston Bay and became the newlyweds' first home, filled with both Margaret's personal furnishings from Alabama, as well as newer pieces. She renamed it Ben Lomond as a tip of the hat to the romantic Walter Scott works she had read, and delegated management of the household to her mother Nancy.

Sam Houston

Steamboat House, where Sam Houston died

The Steamboat House at the Sam Houston Memorial Museum Complex in Huntsville, Texas, United States. It was rented by Sam and Margaret Houston after the Texas Secession Convention removed him as Governor of the State of Texas for refusing to swear a loyalty oath to the Confederacy. He died in this house in 1863. The State of Texas allocated money to repair and move the house to its current location at Sam Houston State University as part of the 1936 Texas Centennial commemoration.

Sam Houston

Nancy Lea died of an undiagnosed set of flu-like ailments on February 7, 1864, and was entombed on the grounds of her home. Margaret died on December 3, 1867, having contracted yellow fever during an epidemic. Walter Reed would not make his discovery of the cause of yellow fever through mosquito bite until 1900 contamination through contact was the pervading fear in 1867, and prevented Margaret's remains from being interred in a public cemetery with her husband's. She was buried in the ground beside Nancy's tomb at 11 p.m. by her servant Bingley, family friend Major Eber Cave, and her two daughters Nettie and Mary Willie. No funeral service was performed.

Mrs. Sam Houston House is a historic house on Farm to Market Road 390 in Independence, Texas. Sometimes known as the Root house, this Greek Revival house was built probably around 1855.